

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 00460 251327Z

73

ACTION NEA-13

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AF-10 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 ACDA-19 DRC-01

/161 W

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R 251218Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1297

IMFO RUSKG/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 6748

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

DESOR/USINT CAIRO 3898

USMISSION OH USUN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C G N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 0460

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UK, XF

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH BRITISH AMBASSADOR

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

1. BRITISH AMBASSADOR LEDWIDGE CALLED ON ME TODAY AT HIS REQUEST. AS USUAL, HE HAD HIS EXTENSIVE CHECKLIST AND RAIDED ALL CONCEIVABLE SUBJECTS CONCERNING CURRENT SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HIS MAIN INTEREST, HOWEVER, APPEARED TO BE TEMPO AND VENUE OF FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ARABS AND ISRAELIS. ITEM WORTH REPORTING FOLLOW.

2. STRANGELY ENOUGH, LEDWIDGE SEEMED TO TAKE SERIOUSLY THE PRESS REPORTS OF A POSSIBLE MILITARY COUP AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT, AIDED BY THE U.S. WE SPENT AN INORDINATE
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 00460 251327Z

AMOUNT OF TIME ON THIS SUBJECT

AT HIS INITIATIVE. IT TOOK A WHILE TO CONVINCE HIM
(HOPEFULLY) THAT WE CONSIDERED SUCH REPORTS UTTER NONSENSE.

3. LEDWIDGE REPORTED THAT FORMIN EBAN IN HIS CONVERSATIONS
WITH EC AMBASSADORS ON JAN 21. WAS MOST GUARDED AND
EVASIVE WHEN QUESTIONED ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE
NEGOTIATIONS WITH SYRIA ON A DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT. (THE
FRENCH CHARGE IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION MADE THE SAME POINT
TO US.) IT WAS PARTICULARLY PERPLEXING, HE SAID, THAT EBAN REFUSED
TO CHARACTERIZE AS SYRIAN "PROPOSALS" WHATEVER THE SECRETARY
BROUGHT TO ISRAEL FROM DAMASCUS.

4. LEDWIDGE ASKED IF WE HAD NOTICED ANY CHANGE IN THE ISRAELI
POSITION ON "PALESTINIAN" RELATED SUBJECTS: SEPARATE DELEGATION
IN GENEVA, INDEPENDENT WEST BANK STATE, ETC. I REPLIED IN
THE NEGATIVE, NOTING I DID NOT REALISTICALLY EXPECT ANY CHANGE
IN THIS ISRAELI POSITION IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. (WE GAVE THE
FRENCH CHARGE THE SAME ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION.)

5. LEDWIDGE STATED THAT HIS ISRAELI CONTACTS WERE LINKING
ACTUAL OPENING OF CANAL TO FURTHER ISRAELI WITHDRAWALS IN
IN SINAI. HE WONDERED IF SITUATION IN SOUTH COULD REALISTICALLY
STAY FROZEN FOR THE MANY MONTHS IT TAKES TO OPEN THE CANAL.
AS WITH MANY OF HIS OTHER QUERIES, I DIVERTED THE SUBJECT INTO
WHAT IS BEST DESCRIBED AS "GLITT# GENERALITIES."

5. COMMENT: FROM PRESS REPORTS AND EMBASSY CONTACTS, WE
HAVE ALSO RECENTLY NOTED THAT ISRAELIS APPEAR TO BE LINKING
FURTHER WITHDRAWALS IN THE SINAI TO THE ACTUAL OPENING OF THE
CANAL. DEPUTY MINISTER OF TRANSPORT YAACOBI (CLOSE TO DAYAN)
RECENTLY RAISED THIS "LINK" IN A CONVERSATION WITH US, NOTING
THAT IT WOULD TAKE 8-10 MONTHS FOR THE CANAL TO BE OPENED,
THUS SUGGESTING ISRAEL WOULD HAVE AT LEAST THAT MUCH TIME BEFORE
CONTEMPLATING FUTURE WITHDRAWALS IN THE SOUTH.
KEATING

NOTE BY OC/T: # AS RECEIVED, WILL BE SERVICED UPON REQUEST. CONFIDENTIAL
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PAGE 03 TEL AV 00460 251327Z

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